

Tuesday, November 11, 1964

MR. NYLAND: "A little different arrangement, in the back ~~stairs of this office~~, as you noticed, I hope. ^{There} ~~stairs of this office~~, ^{chair but} ~~passes by on~~ No one climbed over the ~~stairs and everybody's path is~~ on that table, and it's like this. I explained ^{it} in the first meeting we had that I would like to have a little bit clearer attendance and also responsibility on the part of all of you to know that you're not trying to eliminate certain obligations you have. Obligations, as you know, are quite, quite simple. Each person pays three dollars; if they cannot, maybe two; if they cannot, one dollar, and in very exceptional conditions they can have free, ^{we got} very exceptional. Those who wish to pay per month, pay fifteen dollars a month. You understand very well why I say this. A person who is slipshod about this kind of a thing is never able to work. You ^{want to learn} you have to have a certain form of discipline and the discipline at the present time, I will supply, because I've been much too lenient in many ways. ^{for} With Tuesday evening, I request that you do follow certain instructions and live up to them. If you don't do it for ^{me}, you'll never do it for yourself, ^{for} And after all, you have to establish in yourself a certain, you might call it, a dictator, that is your "I". If you want to develop it, it has to be strong enough to tell your

body, or your mind, or your feelings what ~~to~~ ought to do, and this is one way of learning. Don't get away from obligations. These happen to be the obligations, and you conform. If you cannot do that, you don't belong. If you bring any new people to the first group, make it very clear to them that they ~~ought to~~ ^{also} pay when they come for the second time. The first time it's free. When you tell them to come, you have to tell them about money, even if you don't like it. I don't want any particular surprises here. Also, ~~no credit~~. This is now a group. No one is allowed to come in unless they pay. If you haven't got it, borrow it, or prepare for it so that you have three dollars in your pocket with which you can pay, unless you're on a monthly basis. Then we'll allow you to go through. You understand that now, because I don't want to say it too often. Sometimes you get me a little sick and tired and it's not necessary at all. You have to understand what is an obligation on your own part and that belongs to the group and please help those who sit there. It's not ~~their pleasure to do this~~, but they have instructions from me now, and they will try to live up to it, and you, help them. That's one thing when you come, ~~you~~ are that serious regarding it. You come to a group, ~~that~~ is, we want to talk about life. We want to talk about that what is ~~life~~ ^{right} for one, what we ought to do, how we want to grow, how there is a possibility of developing, of really working, ~~just~~ not some wishy-washy affair, really work, so that it is

clear to you, and that you have the intention, you remember, Tuesday is that kind of a meeting. I expect people to work, and yet you ask May 2 to come to a Tuesday, you have the ~~increased~~ ? obligation. You incur it, that you ~~want~~ wish ^{to} work and that you really make attempts, that you're not always successful, that you forget, that ordinary life takes over - everybody knows that, that it is difficult, we all agree. ^{But} ~~in~~ the end you have to be right, it is one ^{of seriousness} ~~theory~~.

So don't be wishy-washy about that. Don't be wishy-washy about ~~attendance~~ ^{attempts}. Try to make it as clear as you can to ^{That} yourself, ~~it~~ is an obligation. You live up to that obligation, and don't have anything really ~~and don't have~~ ^{in between} anything really coming ~~between~~ it. How else can you consider work, unless you consider it of paramount importance? So, temporarily, a person need not want to come, or perhaps, doesn't want to come, or that he is already a little bit overfilled, and he has too many ideas, and he cannot work them away. That, one can understand. It's not a question of filling yourself all the time with things that simply are in addition without you using them. Maybe you have to learn how to use it. Maybe you have too much already. Maybe you feel ashamed that you don't. Whatever ~~the~~ conditions are that you feel that you want to stay away, it's all right. Let me know. Now, with that out of the way, you might say, I can calm down. Don't think for a moment, that I was not calm. Next week I won't be here. Carl Burns will take

over, and I hope all of you will come. He can be helped by those who have been in this kind of Work already for some time. He might call on you, and don't hesitate one moment, cause if you want to speak, you can speak. Carl will allow it, of course. If someone has to leave, someone has to take authority. So, *live it and he'll also do it* ~~ask him to do anything you want to~~ ^{again} ~~do it~~ on the Wednesday. I expect to be back by the end of next week. *Now, what will we talk about that is important?* Something that you need, something ^{that} you can use, something that is not clear, about which you want clarity, that we can talk about it, light it up from different angles, if you possibly need that kind of information, data, things you have thought about, you've read, things that are unclear. We'll try to clear it up. Who has questions? 

for several weeks and many
: *"It was a* ^s *week's* and many times during the meeting two words would recur to me - chief feature. I have no idea why. I ^{had} ~~had~~ a question. I've been trying to formulate this question regarding chief feature and this constant recurrence of this thought. Uh-it's a question of the significance of chief feature, how ^a to discern chief feature and what the significance of discerning chief feature is in Work. That's all I can say about it."

MR. NYLAND: "Well, of course, you remember Gurdjieff

saying in the last chapter that if someone were familiar with his ~~Writings~~^{Writings}, it was not necessary to repeat, but all he had to do was to refer to page so-and-so of his ~~Writings And you Could read it~~^{Writings} ~~and he would~~^{be} Well, I thought many times about chief feature, and there are some tapes ~~on the significance~~^{in existence and I would advise you to listen} ~~and other things like it~~^{and other things like it}, But it won't help us at the present time.

Chief feature is chief feature. It is a feature. That is, it belongs to me. It is a certain way of how I am, and as such, as a feature of myself, it belongs to me as an expression of my personality, or a tendency that is in me, either in my mind or in my heart - my feeling - or sometimes expressed in an ordinary, habitual form of behavior. All of these things as expressions of myself are features of myself. They have a different motivating place. They come out as a different kind of an expression, and I'm trying now, if I want to find out what is my chief feature, to find out what are the features of myself, in the first place.

So, it requires a study and then I want to make sure that that what I look for then as a personality and that personality is understood in expression as well as ⁱⁿ motivation. Where does it come from? I can say it comes from one or the other of the three centers. Sometimes it's a little mixed; sometimes it is not so clear; sometimes I do things haphazardly without any particular thought, without any possi-

bility of knowing where it has come from, but I find myself expressing something in a certain way. Nevertheless, ~~if~~ I can come to a description of myself as a type, as I am, as a personality, sometimes superficially, sometimes more essential, sometimes, sometimes I dare to call it more real. All of that belongs to the features of myself.

I start to classify them. I start to look at myself, at times, in a certain way seeing that I behave, really, many times, in the same kind, but sometimes conditions may be a little different, but my attitude is the same. In dealing with different kind of people, particularly if the people are ^{similar} more or less of a kind of a group, my attitude towards them will be more or less the same. Sometimes, regarding one person, I have a relationship with one person, and I'm always the same kind of a relationship, - for instance- I say, in my voice such and such a thing. My voice always might ~~always~~ have a little edge to it. When I am in the presence of someone, I'm a little [?]. If I'm meeting someone I don't really like, ^{then} that it comes out in something that I'm short, or ^{or} don't want to spend too much times, or I'm as anxious as I can be to break off the conversation and say good-bye and so forth, whatever it is. There are ~~a person's~~ ^{Certain} definite ways of ^{my} features of myself which I can more or less classify as belonging to a group. I am, for instance, if I'm ~~a farmer~~, I probably always connect it with the weather, ^{if} since I'm dependent on

the weather for the crops. If I'm a banker, I always will look at a person if he's credit worthy or not worthy to get a loan from me. If it's a person I have an insurance business, my friends and acquaintances always will be the possibilities for writing out some more insurance for them because that is my friendship with them, that's how my friendship is based, and things of that kind. I have, for myself, regarding my own profession, a definite attitude towards other people, ~~or~~ ^{also} to whom I want to sell, or who are in contact with my profession, and if my profession is dependent on the relationship with such people, I usually will be, for myself, having the same kind of thought ^{as} ~~all the time~~ regardless of Mr. A. B. C.. and D, whatever it may be. I try to learn for myself, what I really am. It is what is me, as a personality regarding other people, and I use other people now, to find out what is it really true about me, that I am, as ~~a~~ personality.

Regarding a chief feature, ~~there~~ ^{that} is, if I feel that there are motivating forces in me which make my behavior the way they are, the way ^{that} are, then, when I see ~~there~~ ^{That are} many dependent on one particular kind of feature. The question of chief feature could be having fear with people with whom I'm ~~associated~~.

, fear of expressing myself for fear of being laughed at. For instance, I have a tendency always to shift things around just a little bit in order to appear better than what

I am. Or, that perhaps I'm a little bit inclined to not always tell the entire truth, but always keep a little bit for myself. Or, maybe I am, by so-called nature, secretive. I don't want to communicate with people, but I feel that there ought to be something for myself, even if it's not food for truth, it doesn't matter, *It may not be a lie*. It may be a tendency on my part not to be too *open*. Maybe, just the other way, I'm very talkative. I wear my heart on my sleeve. Very often I may be too *hysterical*, or get emotionally involved, whatever it may be. I see that I am, in a variety of ~~different~~ conditions, with different people, usually the same way. Now, this is behavior as far as the outside world is concerned.

P Now I come to the con...consideration of what I am, as I am by myself, and I think and feel about people, or about conditions, or about my own experience. I try to explain to me, certain things why I am always thinking or feeling the same way, even without expressing it. I come closer and closer now to what I really am when I'm away from people, and when I, for myself, can be honest, or at least not be interfered with anyone else requiring that I behave in a certain way, *So that when* ~~with whom~~ I am within my own little room by myself, and I can have a good heart to *Now* heart talk with myself. ~~Well~~, I start to classify that what I consider myself worthwhile as a motivating force for that what makes my personality. *So*, it is not of a negative kind. It is something that motivates me, and, on

which, I would say, I can rely. That ~~is~~ ^{if}, regarding that what I now do, on the periphery of my life, I see how much comes really from something that is less and less disturbed by outside conditions, but always gives me, within myself, my own motivation, and then that motivation is there regardless of the expression of that manifestation. It is instigated by something that becomes a little bit more, for me, below the surface, more essential for myself, and for that reason, I say, it's as if I want to discover that what is really motivating force, I first have to take away the different forms of manifesting of myself, in order to see clearer what is really left. ~~So when I~~

So when I start to discover what is my chief feature, I want to find out what I am. I try now to relax first. That is, I do not want an expression of a certain kind. I want to find out what it is that is left after I have relaxed. It becomes quite important, because I will have an opportunity not to express anything. At the same time my thoughts and feelings are contained, and I now become, as it were, more essential for myself, since I don't have to express myself ~~from the first~~ ^{on the periphery}. With this kind of a state in which I am now, and making myself relax physically, I try to relax also emotionally and intellectually by eliminating all extraneous thoughts. And still I have something that makes for me a motivation for wanting to continue to breathe and to live.

So, I come closer and closer to that what is more

essential for me, and closer and closer to that what is not influenced by the manifestations, as such, but which continues to live, when I really am by myself, and not even affected by anyone else, and trying not to be affected by the thoughts or the feelings I have. This is a long process. Because many times I will drift off on different kinds of manifestations or ~~periphery problems~~ and I ^{will} not be able to remain ~~essentially~~ attentive to what I am. It is the reason why Ouspensky writes or talks about ~~the man who got drunk~~ or under certain conditions and he asked for a slugger of gin, it is that the periphery of himself and the behavioristic forms are eliminated, ^{and} that what is left is really a child in him, or whatever is essential.

If I, by means of relaxation, by means of non-expressing any manifestation, by just being, can come closer to what I really am inside, I come closer to that what motivates me in life. For instance, if I reduce all the different, extraneous manifestations to practically nothing, when I sit. When I drain my mind, and I drain, as my feelings much as I can, my feelings, and there is still something that is left of me, with a wish to live, I ask myself why do I wish to live. The difficulty is that I always go over into a manifestation in my mind, that I will do this and I will do that, and I will do that. I try to bring it back again to my essence of what I am in reality, and what really makes me wish to continue to live,

that is, I try to do away with all the relationships I have, in order to find out what it really is in me that goes out into the various relationships. This is a long process, and it's a process that I cannot always do by myself, because I fool myself, and that sometimes ~~a~~ little indication from someone else, outside who doesn't know me-all this involved process, but only sees me as a manifestation, can sometimes be very close to the truth, in telling me what is really so, when I myself am unable to see it.

A child, for instance can tell you the truth, because it's ~~uninhibited~~ Friends will not tell you the truth. A little bit of an enemy will tell you ^{the truth}. A friend who is disappointed, he will tell you. I would pay heed to what people think of me, ~~Not~~ what they say, but what I know they think. When I understand what they think without saying it, but which becomes ~~notable~~ ^{notable} in their behavior towards me, I'll have to verify it with that what I am. Am I really that? This is one way. ~~A~~ little I sit quiet and I try to look inside. The other way is that I consider my ~~different~~ ^{different} manifestations from a light as if I look at it as someone else would look at it, that is, one can say objective. But in that sense that that what I am using as manifestations is not really my own, only it happens to be in a certain way, the way I am, the way I express myself as a personality..I listen to it; I listen to my ^{thoughts} ~~thoughts~~ I become aware of myself as I am. I look at my walk. I classify it in a certain way

as a ~~fact~~ certain fact. That is, by eliminating that what is in the manifestation, and bringing it down to what becomes a motivating force, I have to become more according to the type I am. Sometimes I'm helped by ^a little ~~astrology~~
~~that~~ when that is, ~~when~~ I see ~~that~~ I was born on a certain day, whatever the zodiac said, whatever the planets said - those are all ~~tendencies~~, not that they are very important, but they help me to classify myself, as far as a birth?

is concerned, as far as my feelings are concerned as subject to ~~the earth~~, and as far as my intellect is concerned, as subject to the earth. That's as far as astrology goes. If my astrology can be based on the heliocentric concept, I get a little closer to the possibility of what my mind is, and the mind as potentially different from what it is actually could give an insight in myself, but not fooling myself like my ordinary mind. The question, then of objectivity regarding expressions of myself in manifestations of my behavior. I now look and see what particular class I belong to. Then I will know what it is that makes me behave in a certain way, always the same way, because of certain thoughts or feelings I have. The question of chief feature, now, becomes one of understanding what is one's attitude towards life, ~~what makes one do, or not do, certain~~ things, ~~what makes one, at times, having, or not having,~~ ^{at times} ~~or not fear?~~ What makes one have intellectually, a consideration or not a consideration. These things are important, because as soon as I start to put myself, then, in a certain

classification, as having this and that tendency, I will see that there is a fundamental motivation of myself for the wish to maintain myself as I am the way I am, that is, shorn of all the different manifestations of the outside, I still am something. Maybe it is a wish to live, but it is a wish to live in a certain way. My chief feature is now, that what is most important for me to continue to live the way I am. You see, this becomes very difficult, because I do not want to spend the time, and if I do spend the time, I go off on manifestations which are away from that what is my motivating force. And I have to go around it and around it, as in in a spiral, as if in the center of myself, it is like a flame, and I have to come that close to the flame, that I am willing to be sacrificed for the sake of truth about myself. I say, this is the search for chief feature. So I start with a working hypothesis of something that I say, well this is obvious. Then I go . I am a coward always the same-account. I ~~test~~ check it this out, if I am. I try to remember how I used to be, how I am now, what conditions could make me cowardly, and I will see if I am in certain situations again behaving like that. I will have to write up all the different classifications and tendencies that I, that I can figure out that I think I've had as an experience, and I start checking every single one, to see if that is actually the case with me or not. Some that I will throw out, some that I will take. Out of others I will retain,

denominator of
that I will get the greatest - uh- common denominator, every-
thing of me, as a tendency relating finally to the point in
time where they all meet. You understand that? It is a big
job, and it is not done overnight, but one sees oneself
every once in a while, in a certain light, and that *I retain*
. I don't run away from it. I don't excuse it.

The difficulty about chief feature is, that there are more
excuses of rationalizations with that kind of feature.

features
It is the quintessence of my ~~feelings~~, and it's also the
quintessence of all my rationalizations. This leads to
the third way. The third way is, how am I in my thoughts
or in my feelings, covering up what I am. It's quite impor-
tant, because I am not at all to the outside what I really
am inside, and I will find out that with certain people I
can be much more ~~open~~ and honest, but with myself, many
times I don't dare to be honest, because I have a fear within
myself of even showing that to myself. And that ~~objection~~
to finding my chief feature, is that I ~~have~~ fear to see it.

It may turn out that I'm really a ?, or that
I really am a liar, or that there are many things in me
that I want to hide, and I am ashamed of them, and I don't
want anyone else, neither do I want to know it myself be-
cause I don't want to live with it. The question of chief

feature is that I've learned to live with something that is
a little bit different ^{from} ~~that~~ I would like it to be. It does
not mean that it is bad or good, but that it would be ~~horrid~~ *honest*

to be able to face it. If I am on that particular road of trying to find out what it is that I would call my conditions, my rationalizations, my considerations, my explanations, all the different things, not wanting the let's say to take responsibility, but always to explain it why I couldn't do it. For instance, I'm late all the time. Always I can have an excuse, because the subway

, I couldn't do it,

This and that, I couldn't do it. All the time, Always that I'm late. It is definitely a tendency. It's a tendency that's probably very deep, maybe I-think sometimes I think that by being late, I will draw attention to myself. Who knows what particular vanity may be involved. But I have to see it. What are my tendencies I pay, in driving a car, What do I want to manifest in doing it, in the way I do it. When someone hits me, what do I think? My fault, his fault, everybody's fault, God's fault, who knows. These are little things. I break a glass, ah, it was too you know, so Slippery, too much soap used, so it sulks, -it but it sulks, it sulks, so I watch it. Avoid getting out of the way. Be true, rationalization I call that life. These kind of things within oneself, very and them subtle. Still one has to keep on, putting oneself constantly in front of oneself, and questioning, is questioning, is that really the thing that I really think, or is it something that has been laid on to me, or that I have become familiar with, and now I live with it, and I believe it to be true. You understand, now?

^{1/1}
Supp-Suppose that I know now approximately. I learn a
Suppo-
gret-

great deal about what I am. It has an effect on the behavior of myself. Now I . I see, I see myself being, you might say, being used by my chief feature. That is, before I know it, my so-called chief feature has already created a condition in which my behavior is then behaving. The form which it has already taken, because of that motivating force within me. This, now, since I know the motivation, I'm not critical. I only see it as something that belongs to me, almost par excellence. It is *real*. . It is really me, as a person. And now it becomes extremely important to use it for the sake of waking up, *Can* Because, as soon as I have recognized *that* it is something that belongs to the real me, it is me now manifesting, I become objective, because I have explained it to myself, that that is real me, and there is no other explanation of it. So, the acceptance of myself, knowing my chief feature, is much easier when I don't have to be ~~identified~~. You see, I see it in relationship to the necessity of that what I am and must behave because of *my* chief feature. When that is once understood with my mind, I will never attach any identification. I will never like it or dislike it. I will always take it for what it is, that is, the reality of myself. And, in that sense, I could become quite free and objective.

So, Ousepnsky calls it chief fault. I think it's an entirely wrong *word*. It is a feature of me, which is *ef*

of such extreme usefulness, if I know it, that I can be guided by that motivation of myself, I will know myself, and the whole problem is to know myself, that I have to be impartial regarding that, yes, and that I have to know myself everywhere and always, yes, all of that is implied in Work, but it is such an extremely useful tool. So, don't throw it away, If that is it, then ha, that is you. And you then, because you know that is you, as coming from your mechanical behavior, for which you, were not responsible in an unconscious state, you need not be partial. It's one of the best tools ~~that~~ ^{it's} is to work with,

• Yes?

Well, ~~I make a lot of effort~~ ^{The amount} ~~I can put in~~ can put in during the day, and I ~~am~~ ^{not} coming to observing myself, ~~it~~ seems to be ^{dependent on} kind ^{from some part of the day, uh} a vague state ~~it~~, but it rules the day. a certain state and ^{it} is good, my efforts will encourage me, and ^{if the state is} ~~any~~ a state, everything is bad, ^{I can go through a day} ~~without~~ really working on myself and ^{In other words, if I can remember} where a wish to work comes from. ~~If~~ ^{any} That I wish ^{to} longer that I wish to ^{know} ~~my~~ oneself, that moves me to really want to see myself, but I can so easily forget that and I can go off in a lot of different directions and forget that really all I want to do is know myself. So,